

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for use in a cable television network to provide public, educational and governmental (PEG) programming pursuant to an agreement with a local franchising authority for a local area, the method comprising:

providing a PEG channel in a channel lineup for a [[the]] local area in accordance with the local franchising authority agreement;

providing backdrop programming on the PEG channel, the backdrop programming being general local interest programming provided by the cable television network;

determining an availability of locally produced PEG programming; and

responsive to determining that when the locally produced PEG programming is available and intended for local transmission broadcast, unconditionally preempting the backdrop programming and providing the locally produced PEG programming on the PEG channel thereby providing the locally produced PEG programming against a backdrop of general local interest programming provided by the cable television network.

2. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via local public access to the cable television network.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via educational access to the cable television network.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via local governmental access to the cable television network.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the cable television network encompasses a plurality of local areas, wherein (PEG) programming is provided on the PEG channel to the [[a]] local area pursuant to an agreement with a corresponding local franchising authority, and wherein the backdrop programming general local interest programming is provided on PEG channels for multiple local areas.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the cable television network includes a video on demand (VOD) platform, the VOD platform including a library of locally produced PEG programming, the method further comprising:

providing locally produced PEG programming on demand with the VOD platform, wherein the locally produced PEG programming on demand is selectable by a subscriber.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the cable television network includes a high speed data (HSD) platform, the HSD platform including a library of locally produced PEG programming, the method further comprising:

providing locally produced PEG programming on demand with the HSD platform, wherein the locally produced PEG programming on demand is selectable by a subscriber.

8. **(Currently Amended)** A method for use in a cable television network to provide public, educational and governmental (PEG) programming pursuant to agreements with local franchising authorities for local areas, the method comprising:

providing a PEG channel in the channel lineup for each local area as required by the corresponding local franchising authority agreement;

providing backdrop programming on each PEG channel, the backdrop programming being general local interest programming provided by the cable television network;

for each local area having a PEG channel, determining an availability of locally produced PEG programming; and

responsive to determining that when the locally produced PEG programming is available and intended for local transmission broadcast in a particular local area having the PEG channel, unconditionally preempting the backdrop programming and providing the locally produced PEG programming on the PEG channel in the particular local area ~~thereby providing the locally produced PEG programming against a backdrop of general local interest programming provided by the cable television network.~~

9. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via local public access to the ~~eable~~ television network.
10. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via educational access to the ~~eable~~ television network.
11. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the locally produced PEG programming is created via local governmental access to the ~~eable~~ television network.
12. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the backdrop programming ~~general local interest programming~~ is provided on PEG channels for multiple local areas.
13. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the ~~eable~~ television network includes a video on demand (VOD) platform, the VOD platform including a library of locally produced PEG programming, the method further comprising:

providing locally produced PEG programming on demand with the VOD platform, wherein the locally produced PEG programming on demand is selectable by a subscriber.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 8 wherein the ~~eable~~ television network includes a high speed data (HSD) platform, the HSD platform including a library of locally produced PEG programming, the method further comprising:

providing locally produced PEG programming on demand with the HSD platform, wherein the locally produced PEG programming is selectable by a subscriber.

15. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus for signal distribution in a ~~eable~~ television network comprising:

an interface that is configured to receive backdrop programming ~~general local interest content~~ from a first source and to receive locally produced content from a second source; and  
a processing module configured to be connected to the interface and configured to perform:

providing a channel in a channel lineup for a [[the]] local area ~~in accordance with the local franchising authority agreement;~~

providing the backdrop programming on the channel, ~~the backdrop programming comprising the general local interest content~~ from the first source;

determining an availability of the locally produced content from the second source; and

responsive to determining that ~~when~~ the locally produced content is available and intended for local transmission ~~broadcast~~, unconditionally preempting the backdrop programming and providing the locally produced content on the channel ~~to provide locally produced programming against a backdrop of general local interest programming provided by the cable television network.~~

16. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 15, wherein:

the interface is configured to connect to a video on demand (VOD) platform, the VOD platform including a library of locally produced programming; and

the processing module is further configured to perform:

providing locally produced programming on demand with the VOD platform, the locally produced programming on demand being selectable by a subscriber.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 15, wherein:

the interface is configured to connect to a high speed data (HSD) platform, the HSD platform including a library of locally produced PEG programming; and

the processing module is further configured to perform:

providing the locally produced PEG programming on demand with the HSD platform, the locally produced PEG programming on demand being selectable by a subscriber.

18. **(Currently Amended)** A method for use in a ~~cable~~ television network ~~to provide programming pursuant to an agreement with a local franchising authority for a local area~~, the method comprising:

providing a channel in a channel lineup for a [[the]] local area ~~in accordance with the local franchising authority agreement;~~

providing backdrop programming on the channel, ~~the backdrop programming being general local interest programming provided by the cable television network;~~

determining an availability of locally produced programming; and

responsive to determining that when the locally produced programming is available and intended for local transmission broadcast, unconditionally preempting the backdrop programming and providing the locally produced programming on the channel ~~thereby providing the locally produced programming against a backdrop of general local interest programming provided by the cable television network.~~

19. **(Currently Amended)** A method for use in a cable television network ~~to provide programming pursuant to agreements with local franchising authorities for local areas,~~ the method comprising:

providing a channel in the channel lineup for each local area ~~as required by the corresponding local franchising authority agreement;~~

providing backdrop programming on each channel, ~~the backdrop programming being general local interest programming provided by the cable television network;~~

for each local area having a channel, determining an availability of locally produced programming; and

responsive to determining that when the locally produced programming is available and intended for local transmission broadcast in a particular local area having the channel, unconditionally preempting the backdrop programming and providing the locally produced programming on the channel in the particular local area ~~thereby providing the locally produced programming against a backdrop of general local interest programming provided by the cable television network.~~